

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method of operating a packet network having base stations for communication with mobile units, comprising:

initiating a call involving a group of mobile units,

receiving a wireless signal at two or more of the base stations, from one of the mobile units,

determining at each of the base stations, a respective ~~priority~~ priority-quality parameter for the wireless signal as received at the base station,

adding the ~~priority~~ priority-quality parameters to at least some packets of the respective signals to form prioritized signals,

transmitting the prioritized signals containing the respective ~~priority~~ priority-quality parameters to the network,

receiving the prioritized signals at base stations in the network,

selecting at each of the base stations, a prioritized signal for transmission to mobile units in the group, according to the respective quality parameters, and

transmitting the selected signal to the mobile units.

2. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 further comprising ceasing transmission to the network, of a signal received from the mobile unit, after determining that the signal has a priority lower than that of a corresponding prioritized signal received from the network.

3. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 further comprising commencing transmission of a signal to the network, received from the mobile unit, after determining that the signal has a priority greater than that of a corresponding prioritized signal received from the network.

4. (Original) A method according to claim 3 further comprising the step of waiting for a predetermined time before commencing transmission of the signal to the network.

5. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 3 further comprising the step of discarding at least one packet of the signal transmitted to the network.

6. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the ~~priority-quality~~ parameter is determined by reference to a quality of the respective wireless signal received from the mobile unit, and the signal transmitted to the units is selected according to highest quality.

7. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 6 wherein the quality is an error count for part or all of the respective wireless signal received from the mobile unit.

8. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 6 wherein the quality is the received signal strength of the respective wireless signal received from the mobile unit.

9. (Original) A method according to claim 6 wherein the quality is the signal to noise ratio of the respective signal received from the mobile unit.

10. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 6 wherein the priority-quality parameter of a signal is set to a termination value when the signal ends.

11. - 18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently amended) A method of operating a base station in a packet network during a group call between mobile units, the method comprising:

receiving a wireless signal from a mobile unit in the group call;
determining a priority-quality parameter for the received signal;
adding the parameter to at least some packets of the received signal to form a ~~prioritised~~ prioritized signal; and
transmitting the ~~prioritized~~ prioritised signal to the network;
receiving from the network, one or more prioritized signals originated from the mobile unit and having respective quality parameters; and
ceasing transmission to the network if the added quality parameter is lower in priority than any of the received quality parameters.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently amended) A method of operating a base station in a packet network during a group call between mobile units, the method comprising:

receiving prioritized ~~prioritised~~ signals containing respective priority-quality parameters from two or more other base stations in the network, each of the

prioritized signals having been received by the other base stations as a wireless signal from a common mobile unit;

selecting one of the received signals according to the received priority-quality parameters, and
transmitting the selected signal to units in the group call.

22. (Currently amended) A method of operating a base station according to claim 21 further comprising selecting a different one of the received signals according to changes in the respective priority-quality parameters.